UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL AND
DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE
(FOURTH COMMITTEE)
13th meeting
held on
Friday, 29 October 1993
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 13th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KALPAGE (Sri Lanka)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (continued)

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.4/48/SR.13
3 December 1993
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

93-81951 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (continued)

Decisions of the Committee on draft texts relating to specific Territories

Draft consensus on Gibraltar (A/C.4/48/L.6)

1. The draft consensus was adopted without objection.

Draft resolution on New Caledonia (A/48/23 (Part VII), chap. XI, para. 9)

2. The draft resolution was adopted without objection.

Consolidated draft resolution on the questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Tokelau, Turks and Caicos Islands and United States Virgin Islands (A/48/23 (Part VI), chap. X, para. 28 and A/C.4/48/L.7-L.10)

3. Mr. WALLACE (United States of America), introducing his delegation's amendments to the consolidated draft resolution, reaffirmed his country's commitment to the objective of decolonization. In order to achieve that objective, the Committee should ensure that its resolutions regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories were factually correct. That was why he had proposed a number of amendments to the consolidated resolution submitted by the Special Committee on decolonization. None of the proposed amendments, which essentially were intended to present the facts accurately, ran counter to the principle of self-determination, and in drafting them his delegation had sought to ensure that they would be non-controversial.

4. In the interests of maintaining the consensus of the past two years regarding the consolidated resolution, which was a positive step towards the reform and revitalization of the Fourth Committee, his delegation was withdrawing the amendment to paragraph 2 of document A/C.4/48/L.7, which meant that it no longer wished to delete the words "including marine resources" from paragraph 8. It urged the Committee to accept the other amendments in order to preserve the consensus. It hoped that all other delegations would join in efforts to ensure that the facts were accurately reflected and, thereby, to strengthen the credibility of the Committee.

5. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea) thanked the Committee for adopting by consensus the amendments he had proposed on behalf of the members of the Special Committee in documents A/C.4/48/L.11, L.12 and L.13. He would have liked to bring to the Special Committee the amendments proposed in documents A/C.4/48/L.7, L.8, L.9 and L.10 in order to facilitate the Fourth Committee's action on the amendments, and regretted that he had been unable to do so. The new information that was now before the Fourth Committee had not been available to the Special Committee on decolonization at the time the decisions had been taken. He would ensure that the new information was taken into account when the Special Committee on decolonization considered the consolidated resolution on the 10 territories in question in 1994. However, if the delegation which had

(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

submitted the amendments and the members of the Fourth Committee agreed to put the proposals formally to the Special Committee on decolonization so that it could consider them in informal consultations before the Fourth Committee took action on the draft resolution, he would be happy to so inform the members of the Special Committee. On the other hand, if the Fourth Committee took action immediately, his delegation, as a member of the Special Committee on decolonization, reserved the right to express its position at the substantive session of the latter Committee in 1994.

6. Mrs. CORRIGAN (United Kingdom), referring to Bermuda, said that, as in 1992, her delegation still found it inconceivable that the presence of military bases in Bermuda could constitute an obstacle to independence. Furthermore, her country had no doubt that it was discharging it obligations to the people of the Territory in full.

7. With regard to the British Virgin Islands, her country would take the wishes and interests of the Government and people of the Territory fully into account in connection with the constitutional review.

8. With reference to paragraph 7 of the text on the Turks and Caicos Islands, consultants had recommended to the territorial Administration against the establishment of an investment bank but in favour of a domestic investment agency. Any external assistance to the agency, if established, would be welcome.

Document A/C.4/48/L.7

9. A recorded vote was taken on the amendment proposed to paragraph 1.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Central African Republic, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mauritania, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Botswana, Cuba, Guyana, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam.

10. The amendment was adopted by 57 votes to 11, with 41 abstentions.

Document A/C.4/48/L.8

11. A recorded vote was taken on the amendment to delete paragraph 2.

In favour: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Zaire.

Against: Cuba.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan, Suriname, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

12. The amendment was adopted by 48 votes to 1, with 62 abstentions.

13. A recorded vote was taken on the amendment to delete paragraph 3.

In favour: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Rwanda, Senegal, Suriname, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen.

14. The amendment was adopted by 52 votes to none, with 58 abstentions.

15. A recorded vote was taken on the amendment to delete paragraph 4.

In favour: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Zaire.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Rwanda, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

16. The amendment was adopted by 46 votes to none, with 64 abstentions.

17. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the paragraphs of the text should be renumbered accordingly.

Draft resolution B VI on Guam (A/C.4/48/L.9)

18. A recorded vote was taken on the amendment to the second preambular paragraph (A/C.4/48/L.9).

In favour: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Central African Republic, Congo, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Zaire.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Senegal, Suriname, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

19. The amendment was adopted by 62 votes to none, with 48 abstentions.

20. The amendment to paragraph 1 (A/C.4/48/L.9, para. 2) was adopted without a vote.

21. The amendment to paragraph 3 (A/C.4/48/L.9, para. 3) was adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution B X on the United States Virgin Islands (A/C.4/48/L.10)

22. The amendment to the second preambular paragraph (A/C.4/48/L.10, para. 1) was adopted without a vote.

23. The amendment to paragraph 1 (A/C.4/48/L.10, para. 2) was adopted without a vote.

24. A recorded vote was taken on the amendment to delete paragraph 4 (A/C.4/48/L.10, para. 3)

In favour: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Zaire.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mexico, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan, Suriname, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

25. The amendment was adopted by 50 votes to none, with 58 abstentions.

26. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that paragraph 5 should become paragraph 4.

27. A recorded vote was taken on the amendment to delete paragraph 6 (A/C.4/48/L.10, para. 4).

In favour: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zaire.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mexico, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Rwanda, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

28. The amendment was adopted by 47 votes to none, with 64 abstentions.

29. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that, with the voting now completed, paragraph 6 had been deleted and the subsequent paragraphs should be renumbered accordingly.

30. The consolidated draft resolution, as amended, was adopted without a vote.

Draft decision I on Pitcairn (A/48/23 (Part VI), chap. X)

31. The draft decision was adopted without a vote.

Draft decision II on St. Helena (A/48/23 (Part VI), chap. X)

32. A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malawi, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine.

33. The draft decision was adopted by 79 votes to 2, with 43 abstentions.

34. Mrs. CORRIGAN (United Kingdom), explaining her vote after the vote, said that the draft decision on St. Helena was, as in previous years, unacceptable to her Government since as it referred to military facilities on Ascension Island - even though it was not mentioned by name - which, though linked to St. Helena for administrative reasons, was not on the Committee's agenda. Furthermore, the suggestion that the very limited military facilities in question could be a source of concern regarding offensive acts or interference in the affairs of neighbouring States was incomprehensible. Her Government's policy towards the British Dependent Territories was conducted fully in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. Accordingly her delegation had voted against the draft decision.

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS

35. The CHAIRMAN informed the members of the Committee that he had received a communication containing a request for a hearing relating to the elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa, under agenda item 38. In accordance with the usual practice, he suggested that the communication should be circulated as a Committee document and considered at a subsequent meeting.

36. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

37. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/C.4/48/L.15 containing the programme budget implications of the draft resolution on agenda item 88 (Questions relating to information).

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.

A/C.4
/48/
SR.14

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE (FOURTH COMMITTEE)
14th meeting
held on
Monday, 1 November 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KALPAGE (Sri Lanka)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 88: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued)

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.4/48/SR.14
6 December 1993
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

93-82008 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued) (A/48/21, A/48/407; A/C.4/48/L.15)

1. Mr. VIANELLO-CHIODO (Assistant Secretary-General for Information) welcomed the support expressed by a large number of delegations for the open and innovative approach that the Department had been trying to adopt in the field of information together with the work that it had been doing and wanted to do to meet the new and demanding challenges it faced. It had been especially heartening to hear so many delegations endorse the dissemination of information accessible to all peoples of the world in the "we the peoples" spirit of the United Nations Charter, which would be a critical element in the preparation of a large number of important events scheduled for the forthcoming years, particularly the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Organization.

2. Concerning the questions raised by delegations in the course of the general debate regarding press conferences and information relating to the work of the Security Council in peace-keeping operations and other United Nations political missions said that the question relating to the appointment of a spokesman for the President of the Security Council had been examined on several occasions over the past few years. That appointment would however require the creation of a new post. Currently, it was the press attache of the Permanent Mission whose head was serving as President of the Council who held press briefings for journalists. The President of the Security Council generally held one press conference during the month of his or her tenure. The Department would also examine the possibility of expanding the use of the bulletin board to include information on official and unofficial meetings of the Security Council.

3. The Office of the Spokesman of the Secretary-General, with its relatively small staff, was sparing no effort to meet the ever-increasing number of media queries related to peace-keeping and other United Nations field missions. In addition, the spokesman of the Department for Peace-keeping Operations served as the liaison with the Department of Public Information, and members of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of Human Resources Management served as permanent interfaces with the Department on information matters.

4. The majority of peace-keeping operations also had a spokesman in the field who provided information to the press and was in daily contact with the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General. Major United Nations conferences and other important entities also had individual spokesmen. The unit in the Department of Public Information responsible for preparing information materials on matters relating to peace and security had worked closely with the Department of Peace-keeping Operations in preparing information materials and feature articles designed to inform the public on new and ongoing operations. The publication Blue Helmets would be updated in 1995, as mandated by the General Assembly. In the meantime, the Department had published a booklet entitled United Nations Peace-keeping, as well as a number of reference papers. Every effort was being made to update those materials as frequently as possible and ensure their dissemination both to troop-contributing countries and throughout the world, using desktop publishing and links to world-wide electronic communications networks.

(Mr. Vianello-Chiodo)

5. The Department also made recommendations to the Department of Peace-keeping Operations with regard to additional information activities and strategies which might enhance an operation's ability to accomplish its goals. Those recommendations were made as early as possible so that any staffing and financial implications could be taken into account during the planning stage. Where appropriate, such recommendations related to the establishment of an office and a mission information component, as well as radio and television broadcasts and printed materials informing the public about the scope and purpose of the mission. Moreover, the Situation Centre of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations was developing a computerized data retrieval system which would enable the Department of Public Information to have instant access to the necessary up-to-date information on ongoing peace-keeping operations. Daily reports from the spokesman in the field could also be retrieved from the new Electronic Bulletin Board News Service established by the United Nations radio.

6. With regard to the unequal information coverage of various missions, the Office of the Spokesman of the Secretary-General was aware that important developments in some missions often received insufficient press attention. The Department of Public Information was planning to organize a series of background briefings for the press which would cover all United Nations peace-keeping activities.

7. On the question of Angola, the Department had devoted a substantial part of its news and feature programmes to both the political and the humanitarian situation in that country, including the role of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM). In the course of the first six months of 1993, the Department had produced about two and a half hours of radio programming on Angola. A recent interview with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Angola would be disseminated for use in the programmes "UN News Brief" and "UN Africa". The televised magazine "UN in Action" had recently showed some footage on UNAVEM II, with more scheduled to be shown.

8. While it was true that no information strategy could compensate for the lack of political will, public opinion could nevertheless have a positive influence on the smooth running of United Nations operations, and the Department had always recognized the importance of a strong information and communication component in all field operations. In that respect, the cooperation and coordination between the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Office of Human Resources Management regarding planning, recruitment and training were quite promising.

9. Many of the questions raised during the general debate related to the mandate, functioning and procedure for the establishment of United Nations information centres. Under the procedure currently applied, requests by Member States for the opening of an information centre were normally submitted to the Committee on Information, which made a recommendation to the General Assembly including a request for budgetary resources (posts and operational funds) identified by the Department of Public Information, in consultation with the host Government. In 1983 the General Assembly, in resolution 38/82, had recommended that United Nations information centres should be established "as and when resources become available". In the view of the Secretariat, however,

(Mr. Vianello-Chiodo)

it was a matter for the Secretary-General to determine the allocation of existing resources in the field.

10. As many speakers had recognized, the situation of the information centres was far from satisfactory. There were more information centres than posts on the Department staffing table. The General Assembly had therefore approved an arrangement whereby United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) resident representatives took on, in addition to their normal functions, the functions of directors of information centres where such posts had been abolished owing to staffing cuts. In such cases, the Department had provided the resident representatives with briefings and guidelines on their information tasks, maintained local staff, and, as feasible, enhanced the operational activities of the centres through the provision of modern office equipment, staff training and additional operational funds. The Department was currently endeavouring to reinforce its cooperation with UNDP on information matters in order to allay the preoccupations expressed by many delegations. It would continue to assess the work of each centre, bearing in mind the financial support provided by the host Government, as well as the impact of the activities of the centre on the local public, as suggested by the representative of Brazil.

11. The Secretary-General's decision to integrate 18 United Nations information centres with UNDP offices had been based on the need to present a unified image of the United Nations, to enhance information activities in all areas, including on emerging issues, and to achieve economies of scale through the sharing of services. The integration should also facilitate inter-agency coordination. In the light of those objectives, the Department, in close cooperation with UNDP, was currently making a report on the integrated offices, which would contain the views of the host Governments concerned. The Secretariat would submit that study to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session, and would take fully into account the concerns expressed and the purposes which were outlined in paragraph 8 of the draft resolution before the Committee.

12. Regarding the status of the United Nations Information Centre at Ouagadougou, it was correct that the Centre was not one of the 18 integrated centres. The Centre had had a P-4 director post on its staffing table, which had fallen vacant in April 1991. Since it had not been possible to identify an appropriate candidate rapidly, the post had been redeployed under the new vacancy management system. When the 1994-1995 budget was adopted by the General Assembly, the Department would endeavour to redeploy a post from Headquarters; it would remain in contact with the Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso on that matter. The Department would also intensify its efforts in favour of the Centre, but it should be noted that all the available local posts were filled and the staff had been working hard to maintain the good reputation of the Centre. The Centre was continuing publication of ONU Flash, a monthly newsletter on major United Nations conferences, observances and other events, which was distributed not only in Burkina Faso, but also in Mali, Niger and Chad. It continued to produce press releases and organize exhibits, workshops and seminars. The Department's radio and video programmes were regularly broadcast by national television and radio. The number of people visiting the Centre's library compared well with that of other centres, and film screenings drew a greater number of people than those in many other centres.

(Mr. Vianello-Chiodo)

13. Several delegations had raised the question of regional information centres. In that respect, it should be pointed out that a number of centres, while not regional offices in the full sense of the term, did provide services to neighbouring countries. For example, the United Nations Information Service at Vienna covered Hungary, and the Geneva Information Service had just been reinforced to enable it to provide information to countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, under an understanding on cooperation between the Department and UNDP, in countries where there were no information centres, UNDP offices served as focal points for the local dissemination of materials, and received the same treatment as information centres.

14. A number of delegations had called for the establishment of an information centre - or at least an information presence - in their countries. Those requests bore witness to the continuing interest in and support for the United Nations. Unfortunately, the Department simply did not have the resources available, and, unless the General Assembly provided the additional resources, it would not be possible to accommodate those requests. The difficulties the Department had had in ensuring the timely filling of the vacant posts in the Information Centres at Sana'a and Tehran, not to mention Ouagadougou, stemmed from the need to finance those posts from within existing resources. Furthermore, the Department's proposed 1994-1995 programme budget had cut 14 posts.

15. In accordance with the recommendation of the General Assembly, the Department was working to enhance cooperation with the University for Peace in Costa Rica, which should serve as a focal point for the promotion of United Nations activities and the dissemination of United Nations information materials. The Department was also reconsidering the question of maintaining the Prague Information Centre, whose closure had been briefly envisaged, and would remain in contact with the delegation of the Czech Republic on that matter.

16. Several delegations had voiced their interest in information strategies for forthcoming international conferences and other events. In that regard, the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), composed of the information directors of the various agencies of the common system and the Department of Public Information had, at its July session, held extensive discussions regarding a common, system-wide approach to information programmes for all forthcoming events. The Department was working closely with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to coordinate all aspects of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Information Division of UNFPA, which was the lead agency in the United Nations system for that Conference, had begun implementing an information strategy on issues of population and development. With regard to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, the Department of Public Information, which had been designated by JUNIC as the lead agency, was currently preparing a substantive information strategy on issues relating to that event. At its meeting in September, JUNIC had reached a number of decisions on specific elements of the system-wide information programme relating to the issues before the Conference. At the same meeting, JUNIC had also agreed on a strategy on issues to be considered by the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, for which the Department would also serve as the lead agency.

(Mr. Vianello-Chiodo)

17. The Office of the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Public Affairs was responsible for defining a strategy and reviewing all project proposals for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The Department was cooperating on several projects, including a televisions series, various publications, special events and other public information activities. It had been agreed that all issues relating to special conferences should be linked to that milestone in the history of the United Nations and should be an integral part of a wide-ranging outreach strategy involving all members of the United Nations family. The strategy was to stress the common threads between those conferences while highlighting the issues and themes peculiar to each. Juxtaposing major conferences made it possible to emphasize the Organization's role in development and to bring out the common concerns of the developed and the developing countries on such issues as balanced population growth, the conditions and rights of women and children, job creation and poverty alleviation. Several speakers had expressed concern about the image of the Organization and the criticism levelled against it in certain areas of high visibility. As a number of representatives had stressed, the Department needed to defend the Organization's reputation vigorously in the light of disturbing reports published by certain media. But that challenge should be taken up by the Member States as well.

18. He welcomed the support that certain countries had voiced for the resumption of guided tours, since they were an excellent means of direct communication with the public. In that connection, he mentioned the need to redesign the tour, without losing sight of security requirements.

19. With respect to the tenth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, the Department of Public Information was working with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to produce radio and television programmes. It was also gathering information on what the various United Nations agencies were doing or had done to mitigate the consequences of the disaster.

20. With respect to the Department's role in ensuring the availability of information about the United Nations, he recalled that the Organization had 334 depositary libraries, located in 132 Member States and Territories, and that the Dag Hammarskjöld Library maintained on-line databases providing factual and bibliographic information to various audiences. The Department intended to play its allotted role in the global information village, as demonstrated by the expansion of its electronic communication system to include 210 information networks. In addition, the Department produced a variety of educational materials for primary and secondary schools on such topics as decolonization, human rights, development and the environment, the search for peace and measures to eradicate hunger and disease. Although the Department had been compelled to cease publication of Development Forum at the end of 1992 for financial reasons, it was still committed to examining issues relating to the development of the developing countries, particularly in Africa, including demographic problems, debt, trade, financial flows and regional integration. Its promotion of the World Economic Survey and publication of reports and fact sheets were evidence of that commitment.

(Mr. Vianello-Chiodo)

21. Regarding the need for systematic evaluation of publications and other materials produced by the Department, he said that any programme approved by the General Assembly should have an evaluation component based not on only cost-effectiveness but also on much broader parameters. That could be a costly undertaking.

22. Stressing that the Department would continue to monitor developments on apartheid and the question of Palestine closely, he said that the production of radio programmes in languages other than the official languages of the United Nations depended on decisions taken by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Committee on Information, as well as on the commitment of radio stations to use such programmes. With respect to staffing, a certain parity was maintained within each regional unit of the Radio Section, irrespective of the language used and the number of countries served. As to press releases, every effort would be made to ensure that they were concise and politically balanced, and due account would be taken of the need to maintain parity between English and French.

23. With respect to the problem of office space for accredited correspondents, he recalled the various steps that had been taken to respond to requests. However, because of the heavy financial outlay involved, it would be a good while before the problem was solved. Although it was necessary to exercise flexibility in the use of the Department's limited resources by making extremely difficult choices, ultimately only so much give was possible. The cooperation of countries in strengthening of the Department's information strategy, as well as external expert advice and evaluation studies of all kinds, were welcome. However, due consideration should be given to the resources that would be available to the Department once the General Assembly had approved the programme budget.

24. With respect to the need to strengthen the communication capabilities of developing countries and to promote the free flow of information, the Department remained committed to working with UNESCO to assist both private and public media within the context of the International Programme for the Development of Communication. It would also be continuing its training programme for journalists from developing countries. In conclusion, he wished to pay tribute to the memory of all those who had fallen in the defence of freedom of expression.

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS (A/C.4/48/5/Add.7 and Add.8)

25. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had before it two requests for hearings on agenda item 38, "Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa", which were contained in documents A/C.4/48/5/Add.7 and Add.8.

26. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to grant those requests.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.